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AD HOC COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Agenda item 8

OVERALL REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AGENDA 21

Draft report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole

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Addendum

C. Implementation in areas requiring urgent action

2. Sectors and issues

1. The Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole considered paragraphs 43-54 of the proposed outcome of the special session (A/S-19/14-E/1997/60, chap. I.B) at its _____th meeting, on __ June 1997.

2. At the same meeting, the Committee approved the following amendments and recommended those paragraphs to the General Assembly for adoption, as amended:

(a) In the heading "Radioactive wastes" above paragraph 49, the asterisk and corresponding footnote were deleted;

(b) Paragraph 49 was revised to read:

"49. Radioactive wastes can have very serious environmental and human health impacts over long periods of time. Therefore it is essential that they be managed in a safe and responsible way. The storage, transportation, transboundary movement and disposal of radioactive wastes should be guided by all the principles of the Rio Declaration, and by Agenda 21. States which generate radioactive wastes have a responsibility to ensure their safe storage and disposal. In general, radioactive wastes should be disposed of in the territory of the State in which they are

generated as far as is compatible with the safety of the management of such material. Each country has a responsibility to ensure that radioactive wastes that fall within its jurisdiction are managed properly in accordance with internationally accepted principles, taking fully into account any transboundary effects. The international community should make all efforts to prohibit the export of radioactive wastes to those countries that do not have appropriate waste treatment and storage facilities. The international community also recognizes that regional arrangements or jointly used facilities might be appropriate for the disposal of such wastes in certain circumstances. The management[23] of radioactive wastes should be undertaken in a manner consistent with international law, including the provisions of relevant international and regional conventions and with internationally accepted standards. It is important to intensify safety measures with regard to radioactive wastes. States, in cooperation with relevant international organizations, where appropriate, should not promote or allow the storage or disposal of high-level, intermediate-level and low-level radioactive wastes near the marine environment unless they determine that scientific evidence, consistent with the applicable internationally agreed principles and guidelines, shows that such storage or disposal poses no unacceptable risk to people and the marine environment or does not interfere with other legitimate uses of the sea. In the process of the consideration of that evidence, appropriate application of the precautionary approach principle should be made. Further action is needed by the international community to address the need for enhancing awareness of the importance of safe management of radioactive wastes, and to ensure the prevention of incidents and accidents involving the uncontrolled release of such wastes";

(c) In paragraph 50, the asterisk and corresponding footnote were deleted; in the fourth sentence, the words "it is best for radioactive wastes to be disposed of" were replaced by "radioactive wastes should be disposed of";

(d) Paragraph 51 was revised to read:

"51. Increased global and regional cooperation, including exchange of information and experience and transfer of appropriate technologies, is needed to improve the management of radioactive wastes. There is a need to support the clean-up of sites contaminated as a result of all types of nuclear activity and to conduct health studies in the regions around those sites, as appropriate, with a view to identifying where health treatment may be needed and should be provided. Technical assistance should be provided to developing countries, recognizing the special needs of small island developing States in particular, to enable them to develop or improve procedures for the management and safe disposal of radioactive wastes deriving from the use of radionuclides in medicine, research and industry";

(e) In paragraph 52, the words "indigenous people[s]" were replaced by the words "indigenous people(s)";

(f) Paragraph 53 was revised to read:

"It remains essential to continue efforts for the eradication of poverty through, inter alia, capacity-building to reinforce local food systems, improving food security and providing adequate nutrition for the more than 800 million undernourished people in the world, located mainly in developing countries. Governments should formulate policies that promote sustainable agriculture as well as productivity and profitability. Comprehensive rural policies are required to improve access to land, combat poverty, create employment and reduce rural emigration. In accordance with commitments agreed to in the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action, adopted by the World Food Summit (Rome, 13-17 November 1996),[25] sustainable food security among both the urban and the rural poor should be a policy priority, and developed countries and the international community should provide assistance to developing countries to this end. To meet those objectives, Governments should attach high priority to implementing the commitments of the Rome Declaration and Plan of Action, especially the call for a minimum target of halving the number of undernourished people in the world by the year 2015. Governments and international organizations are encouraged to implement the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture as adopted by the International Technical Conference on Plant Genetic Resources (Leipzig, Germany, 17-23 June 1996). At the sixth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, in 1998, the issues of sustainable agriculture and land use should be considered in relation to freshwater. The challenge for agricultural research is to increase yields on all farmlands while protecting and conserving the natural resource base. The international community and Governments must continue or increase investments in agricultural research because it can take years or decades to develop new lines of research and bring those research findings into sustainable practice on the land. Developing countries, particularly those with high population densities, will need international cooperation to gain access to the results of such research and to technology aimed at improving agricultural productivity in limited spaces. More generally, international cooperation continues to be needed to assist developing countries in many other aspects of basic requirements of agriculture. There is a need to support the continuation of the reform process in conformity with the Uruguay Round Agreement, particularly article 20 of the Agreement on Agriculture, and to fully implement the World Trade Organization Decision on Measures Concerning the Possible Negative Effects of the Reform Programme on Least-Developed and Net Food-Importing Developing Countries".